

**County of Loudoun**  
**Department of Planning**  
**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** July 7, 2010

**TO:** Loudoun County Planning Commission

**FROM:** Stephen Gardner, Project Manager  
Julie Pastor, Director

**SUBJECT:** **July 14, 2010 Planning Commission Work Session**  
**Ashburn Village Shopping Center Comprehensive Sign Plan; ZMOD**  
**2008-0010**

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**BACKGROUND:**

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on this application on April 28, 2010. One member of the public addressed the Commission, speaking on behalf of the Ashburn Village Homeowners Association, and indicated that though the Association was not opposed to the application, additional discussion with the Applicant was needed to address community concerns, notably the possibility of illuminated signage on the rear of the buildings facing Christiana Drive. Discussion from the Planning Commission included concerns about the area of drive-thru signage, the number of proposed in-line tenant signage, and the number of real estate signs. The Applicant indicated an intent at the Public Hearing to amend the application to reduce the number and clarify the location of individual sign types. To allow for further discussion and to allow the applicant to submit a revised comprehensive sign plan, the Commission voted 9-0 to forward the application to Work Session.

**ISSUE STATUS:**

The following issues were identified by staff as outstanding at the Public Hearing. A current status of each is included in bold type face.

- 1. *Specification that in-line (Exhibit 2B) and endcap tenant (Exhibit 2C) building-mounted signage will be limited to one (1) sign per tenant per façade.*** The application has been revised to limit both in-line and endcap tenant signage to one sign per façade with the caveat that two signs may be installed on any storefront greater than thirty-five (35) linear feet, provided the two signs are a minimum of fifteen (15) feet apart. Language has been included that prohibits signage on the rear of buildings facing Christiana Drive. Issue Status: **Unresolved. Allowing two signs per façade for a non-anchor tenant**

deviates from comparable signage approved as part of other comprehensive sign plans which specifies one sign per façade; such a provision may be precedent setting. Conversely, linking the option for multiple signs for a single tenant to the length of a storefront could be comparable to provisions in similar applications that define hierarchies of stores by square footage and allocates greater signage accordingly. The fifteen (15) foot spacing assures adequate separation between signs for the same tenant but not between signs for different tenants. Allocation of additional signage for tenants occupying larger footprints is reasonable, but Staff recommends the fifteen (15) foot spacing provision be applied to all signage and not just signage for the same tenant.

2. ***Reduction of the maximum number of second floor tenant signage (Exhibit 2E) and elimination of either the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Tenant signage or the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Building Identification Signage (Exhibit 2F).*** The number of 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Tenant signs has been reduced from a total of six (6) signs per building to four (4) signs per building; the number of signs per façade has been reduced from four (4) to two (2). The number of 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Building Identification Signs remains unchanged, but a notation has been included that limits one sign per façade. Signage will not be permitted on the courtyard façade. When considering the cumulative impact of both sign types combined, the total number of signs permitted on any one façade has been reduced from a worst case scenario of six (6) signs to three (3) signs. **Issue Status: Resolved.**
3. ***Eliminate ground-mounted monument signs for free-standing restaurant uses (Exhibit 3A) and free-standing single tenant buildings (Exhibit 4A).*** No changes have been made to either the proposed number or size of free-standing signage. Staff notes, however, the following notation has been included on Page 19 of the Comprehensive Sign Plan package, "At any one time, no more than two freestanding signs permitted as sign types 3A, 4A, 5A, and 6A may be located within 50' of each adjoining public right-of-way." **Issue Status: Unresolved.** Though the notation may limit signage along the frontages of right-of-ways, it does not impact the total number of free-standing signs that may ultimately be permitted. Staff maintains its recommendation that free-standing signage be eliminated.
4. ***Reduce both the individual and aggregate sign area for Restaurant Drive-Through Menu Signs (Exhibit 3B).*** Two restaurant drive-thru signs are proposed. The individual sign area of the second drive-thru sign has been reduced from seventy-five (75) square feet to twenty (20) square feet with a corresponding reduction in the aggregate sign area from 150 square feet to ninety-five (95) square feet. **Issue Status: Resolved.**
5. ***Reduce the number of Directional Signs (Exhibit 7B) and specify a maximum number of signs per pad site rather than per tenant; reclassify as***

***miscellaneous directional signs, on-site.*** The sign type has been clarified such that directional signs will be permitted for free-standing, single-occupant buildings only. The number of directional signs for a tenant without a drive-thru has been reduced from four (4) to two (2); the number of directional signs for a tenant with a drive-thru service lane remains unchanged. **Issue Status: Resolved.**

- 6. Reduce the total number of Real Estate monument signs (Exhibit 8A).** The maximum number of signs along any single public right-of-way has been reduced from three (3) to (2), though the total number of signs permitted remains the same. **Issue Status: Unresolved. A total of six (6) free-standing signs are proposed. Though a limitation of signage along right-of-ways is appreciated, the total remains excessive and should be reduced.**

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff is able to support approval of this application, given the following items are addressed:

1. Specification that both in-line and endcap tenant signage will maintain a fifteen (15) spacing between all signs and not just between signs for the same tenant;
2. Elimination of the free-standing signage for both restaurants and free-standing single tenant buildings; and
3. Reduction of the total number of Real Estate monument signs.

Staff notes the Conditions of Approval have been revised to reflect the Comprehensive Sign Plan dated November 24, 2008, revised to May 25, 2010; no other changes to the Conditions have been proposed.

**SUGGESTED MOTION:**

1. I move that the Planning Commission forward ZMOD 2008-0010, Ashburn Village Shopping Center Comprehensive Sign Plan, to a subsequent Work Session for further discussion.

OR,

2. I move that the Planning Commission forward ZMOD 2008-0010, Ashburn Village Shopping Center Comprehensive Sign Plan, to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation of approval, subject to the Conditions of Approval dated July 7, 2010 and with the following Findings for Approval:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_



OR, 3) \_\_\_\_\_

3. I move that the Planning Commission forward ZMAP ZMOD 2008-0010, Ashburn Village Shopping Center Comprehensive Sign Plan to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation of denial, based on the following Findings for Denial:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

OR,

4. I move an alternate motion.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Vicinity Map
2. Conclusions
3. Conditions of Approval; dated July 7, 2010
4. Applicant Memorandum; dated May 28, 2010
5. Comprehensive Sign Plan; dated November 24, 2008; revised to May 25, 2010 (Attached)

### VICINITY MAP



**Directions:**

From Leesburg, take Route 7 east to Ashburn Village Boulevard. Turn right onto Ashburn Village Boulevard. The subject property will be on the right just before the intersection with Gloucester Parkway. Access is via Ashburn Village Boulevard or Gloucester Parkway.



## **CONCLUSIONS**

1. When considered collectively, the application proposes signage that is not indicative of a "service area-based retail" center but rather a center that caters to and is reliant upon the motoring public.
2. The sign modification establishes standards for the location, size, number, illumination, and color of proposed signage for the Ashburn Village Shopping Center.
3. The number and types of ground-mounted monument signage proposed for both free-standing pad sites as well as Real Estate identification signage is not consistent with the Residential designation and may not be compatible with proximate single-family attached and detached dwelling units.

## **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL – July 7, 2010**

1. Signs shall be provided in substantial conformance with the “Ashburn Village Shopping Center Comprehensive Sign Plan,” dated November 24, 2008, revised May 25, 2010, prepared by LandDesign.
2. Sign materials, colors, size, height, location, number, and lighting shall be provided in substantial conformance with the “Ashburn Village Shopping Center Comprehensive Sign Plan,” dated November 24, 2008, revised February 26, 2010, prepared by LandDesign.
3. Landscaping shall extend around the base of each monument sign a minimum of three feet (3') and shall consist of low-lying shrubbery and/or flowering plants. The use of native species shall be encouraged. All landscaping shall be maintained in good condition.
4. No animation, neon, or moving lights shall be permitted. Signs shall be illuminated internally only and shall contain no exposed lighting elements. No sign illumination shall spill upward or reflect or cast glare onto adjacent properties or roadways.
5. Individual signs shall be maintained in good condition.

Jeffrey A. Nein, AICP  
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BY HAND DELIVERY

May 28, 2010

Stephen Gardner  
Project Manager  
Department of Planning  
1 Harrison St., S.E., 3rd Floor  
Leesburg, Virginia 20177



**RE: ZMOD 2008-0010, Ashburn Village Shopping Center Comprehensive Sign Plan**

Dear Stephen:

We indicated at the Planning Commission public hearing on April 28<sup>th</sup> that we were prepared to make several revisions to the sign plan in response to comments received at the Planning Commission briefing and in discussions with the Ashburn Village Community Association (the "Association"). As you know, we have since continued to work with you and the Association in an effort to resolve all remaining concerns.

Enclosed for your review are three copies of the latest version of the sign plan, revised as of May 25<sup>th</sup>, which has been revised as follows:

1. In-Line Tenant Signs (Exhibit 2B). An in-line tenant may install a second façade sign provided that the storefront is greater than 35 linear feet and the signs are at least 15 feet apart. Signs are not permitted on any back wall that faces Christiana Drive. Please see pages 10, 30 and 31.
2. Endcap Tenant Signs (Exhibit 2C). An endcap tenant may install a second façade sign provided that the storefront is greater than 35 linear feet and the signs are at least 15 feet apart. Signs are not permitted on any back wall that faces Christiana Drive. Please see pages 11, 32 and 33.
3. Second Floor Tenant Signs (Exhibit 2E). The maximum number of tenant signs per building face has been reduced from 4 to 2, with a maximum of 4 such signs overall. Signs are not permitted on the courtyard side. Tenant signs facing Christiana Drive will not be illuminated. Please see pages 12 and 36.
4. Second Story Building Signs (Exhibit 2F). Signs may be externally illuminated only. Please see pages 12 and 38.
5. Freestanding Signs for Restaurants, Tenants, Child Care Centers and Auto Service Stations in Freestanding Buildings (Exhibits 3A, 4A, 5A and 6A). At any one time, no



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- more than 2 such freestanding signs may be located within 50 feet of each adjoining public right-of-way. Please see pages 13, 14, 15, 16 and 19.
6. Drive-Through Menus (Exhibit 3B). Total aggregate sign area has been reduced from 150 sq.ft. to 95 sq.ft. Any secondary menu sign is limited to 20 sq.ft. Please see pages 14 and 43.
  7. Directional Signs (Exhibit 7B). Such signs have been limited to no more than 4 for freestanding, single-occupant buildings with drive-throughs, and to no more than 2 for freestanding, single-occupant buildings without drive-throughs. The previous designation of these signs as "PD-H Community" signs has been removed. Please see page 16, 53, 54 and 55.
  8. Marketing Signs (Exhibit 8A). The number of such signs that may be located along a public right-of-way at any one time has been reduced from 3 to 2. Please see pages 17 and 57.

We believe these revisions address all remaining concerns. Please arrange for this application to be scheduled for the next available Planning Commission work session.

Thank you for your assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

Cooley LLP



Jeffrey A. Nein, AICP  
Senior Land Use Planner

cc: Brian Downie, Vice President, Saul Centers, Inc.  
Jim Tracy, Manager, Ashburn Village Community Association (w/encl)

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